

17. (Currently Amended) A device for engaging tissue at a puncture site and facilitating closure of the puncture site, comprising:

an annular-shaped body defining a plane and disposed about a central axis extending substantially normal to the plane, the body comprising a plurality of looped elements extending about a periphery of the body to form an endless sinusoidal pattern;

a plurality of tines having free distal ends extending from the looped elements towards the central axis of the generally annular-shaped body; and

the body and tines comprising a resilient material so that the body and tines normally lie in a planar, deployed first configuration, the material of the body and tines being sufficiently resilient so that when a force is applied to the tines they are forced from the planar, deployed first configuration into a transverse, pre-deployment second configuration in which the tines and free distal ends are spread open and generally extend in the direction of the central axis for insertion of the free distal ends into the tissue around the puncture site, and thereafter the body and tines will automatically return toward the first configuration so as to engage the puncture site and facilitate closure thereof after the force is removed.